

***NJDHSS Communicable Disease Service Weekly
Statewide Influenza Activity Summary***

Week Ending December 3, 2004

Influenza level of activity: “SPORADIC ACTIVITY”

Influenza testing performed by the Public Health and Environmental Laboratories from November 1, 2004 to present:

- Number of influenza A culture confirmed case: None
- Number of influenza B culture confirmed case: None

Through this week the NJDHSS Communicable Disease Service has not been notified of any outbreak or increased influenza-like illness (ILI) activity in any health care or long-term care facilities or schools throughout the state. However, one of the WHO and NREVSS laboratories located in a Northern New Jersey (Hospital), reported a culture confirmed influenza A specimen collected at one of their out-patient clinics. The PHEL and the CDC will do further typing of the sample. In line with the CDC guidelines for classifying level of activity, this week's level in the state of New Jersey is **“SPORADIC ACTIVITY”**.

Other surveillance parameters are still within the same baseline as last week's.

A few of the county percentage parameters showed figures well above the total average (see 30Nov04 Pdf table), but should not be interpreted as an increased level of activity since the denominator is very small.

Reports from long-term care facilities of ILI since the season began remain in the 1.05% to 1.63% range. Rates of school absenteeism and emergency department reports remained stable. Hospital laboratory surveillance for respiratory syncytial virus (often clinically indistinguishable from influenza virus infection) is starting to show significant increase in the number of tests performed and the number of positives. This is not unexpected as we move later into the season.

According to the CDC nationwide flu report for week 46 (week ending November 20, 2004) two states reported widespread influenza activity; New York and New York City reported regional activity; and 31 states and the District of Columbia reported sporadic activity. Fourteen states including New Jersey reported no activity.

These activity levels were based upon laboratory culture-confirmed cases, and the CDC has antigenically characterized eleven influenza viruses collected since October 1, 2004 by some laboratories in the U.S. Nine of the eleven were influenza A (H3N2) viruses and two were influenza B viruses. These isolates were characterized as A/Fujian/411/2002-like (H3N2), and B/Shanghai/361/2002-like, which were the influenza A and B components recommended for the 2004-05-influenza vaccine

Influenza virus infection itself is not a clinical or laboratory reportable disease according to N.J.A.C. 8:57. Accordingly, activity levels must be extrapolated from weekly monitoring activities of healthcare facilities and providers dispersed around the state.

NJDHSS continues to make progress in making vaccine available to high priority individuals in the state. NJDHSS and LTCF- representative organizations have finalized vaccine allocation and distribution plans for nursing home and assisted living facilities. The majority of the orders have been submitted to the CDC, with the shipment of vaccine expected no later than December 19, 2004.

References and Resources:

- <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>.
- <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/en/>

